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ABSTRACT

In 1989, under a mandate from both the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and its own District Governing Board, Arizona Western College (AWC) began developing an institution-wide employee appraisal plan. A 12-member faculty task force, selected to represent a cross-section of the teaching population, was charged with designing the faculty appraisal system. The task force agreed to develop a system that would help faculty improve professionally while, at the same time, assessing the performance of faculty based on established job descriptions and standards. The results would be used as one factor in determining continued employment. To develop the appraisal system, surveys were administered to faculty asking them to define the various components of their jobs, to rank each component in terms of its importance, and to identify sources of appraisal information. Based on this information, student evaluation and faculty self-evaluation forms were developed. The rating forms can be scanned and computer processed, providing division chairs with a printout on which student mean scores and the faculty self-scores for each statement are reflected. The appraisal system was piloted in spring 1991 with a randomly selected group of faculty from each division. The pilot run was not intended to provide specific information about the faculty, but rather to work out any problems in the survey form instructions, or the data collection and analysis procedures. The pilot test yielded valuable information that the task force was able to use in making revisions to the overall system, including changes in the wording on the evaluation forms, and the elimination of redundant statements. The survey forms are included. (PAA)

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Appraisal of Faculty: Encouragement and Improvement in the Classroom

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Appraisal of Faculty: Encouragement and Improvement in the Classroom

Introduction

Faculty appraisal is often viewed with as much enthusiasm as a trip to the dentist. No one denies its importance, but no one really looks forward to it either. Research by McGregor, Herzberg and others in the area of employee motivation reveals that people generally regard work itself as rewarding and that certain job factors act as satisfiers while others act as motivators. The motivating factors are achievement, recognition, responsibility and advancement.

These findings seem particularly appropriate and meaningful when applied to higher eduction. Community college faculty, whose work is focused predominantly on instructional activities, should be especially interested in learning about the quality of their teaching. Yet faculty rarely make a connection between formal appraisal systems and satisfiers and motivators. Perhaps the challenge for appraisal systems is to provide faculty with as much feedback as possible about their work from as many sources as are appropriate in a manner that is supportive rather than threatening.

Background

In 1989, under a mandate from both the North Central Association and its own District Governing Board, Arizona Western College began developing an institution-wide employee appraisal plan. A faculty task force was established and charged with the job of designing a faculty appraisal system to replace an ineffective evaluation process that had expired from benign neglect. Classified and Professional/Administrative personnel began work to revitalize their

evaluation procedures as well.

The 12-person faculty task force was selected to represent a cross-section of the teaching population at the institute. Although two of the twelve members were administrators, their role was a non-voting one, assuring faculty ownership of the project. A consultant, James O. Hammons, met with the task force for two days, during which he reviewed the results of research in the area and outlined steps to follow when constructing an appraisal system.

Philosophy

The task force agreed that the new faculty appraisal system should serve both formative and summative purposes. In other words, the system would be designed to help faculty improve professionally, and at the same time the system would assess the performance of faculty based upon established job descriptions and standards with the results used as one factor in determining continued employment. It was also agreed that the task force would develop standards and that every effort would be made to provide assistance through a variety of resources to faculty whose performance fell below those standards. Conversely, efforts would also be made to identify and reward exemplary performance.

The overarching purpose of the college-wide appraisal effort is to improve organizational performance. Coupling faculty development with evaluation insures that gains made in organizational effectiveness will be maintained over the long haul (Hammons, 1983).

Developing the System

As a first step, the task force developed surveys that asked faculty to define the components of their job and then to rate each component on its relative importance in their total effort. A follow-up survey allowed faculty to identify the various sources from which appraisal information might be gathered. The results of these surveys indicated that our faculty believed that 80% of their job was involved with teaching (or activities closely related), and that 20% of their effort should be evenly divided between college and community service and personal and professional growth activities.

Months were spent in deliberation over how a system could be constructed to most accurately reflect our particular faculty's perception of their job. A consensus was reached that this might best be accomplished by 1) gathering numerical data from multiple sources, and 2) assigning a weight to each workload component according to how the faculty responded to the surveys. For example our faculty indicated that within the teaching component, 34% of their appraisal should be based upon "implementation of teaching." Therefore the system was designed to generate a final report for each faculty member in which teaching implementation accounts for 34% of his or her total appraisal.

A Synopsis of the System

Early in the semester, each instructor and his or her division chairman select two classes to be appraised (a third section may be requested if the total number of students in the two classes is fewer than 30). As is the case with most faculty appraisal programs, students are the primary source of information on certain aspects of the teaching activity. Students rate faculty

performance using a scanned form in areas for which students are identified as appropriate sources (see Appendix A). For example, students serve as the exclusive source of data for assessing "implementation of teaching," but are only one of several sources to rate areas such as "classroom management" and "teaching preparation." Students are not asked to rate faculty on service or growth and development.

Another scannable rating form was developed to be completed by each faulty member (see Appendix B). This self-appraisal form contains statements, rephrased and shuffled, that correlate with those on the student form. In addition, the self form asks faculty to detail in writing their efforts in service and growth. Finally, division chairmen rate each of their faculty on appropriate aspects of teaching and in the areas of service and growth.

The rating forms are scanned and computer processed, providing division chairmen with a printout on which the student mean scores and the faculty self scores for each statement are reflected. An interview takes place between the faculty member and the division chairman to compare those ratings. The interview process is perhaps the most important aspect of the system because it allows for dialogue to occur (research indicates that performance evaluations are most effective when the information is shared). Should significant differences in ratings emerge that cannot be reconciled, additional data may be obtained by optional collection methods. Chairmen then prepare a summary report that contains weighted rating data for each instructor from all sources on every appraisal component. In the event that the instructor's performance is below the acceptable standard, a developmental plan may be prepared jointly by the faculty member and the chairman specifying corrective action and a schedule for implementation.

Implementing the System

A decision was made to pilot the faculty appraisal system during spring semester, 1991, solely as a test of the system. All information gathered for the pilot would be processed and then returned to faculty; no data would be retained. Forms were printed and distributed, and a computer programming specialist was hired to develop the software necessary for processing the scanned data. An open forum was held prior to the start of spring semester to inform faculty of the procedure and to answer questions. Since division chairmen play such an integral role in the system, several meetings were held to familiarize them as well.

As the semester approached its midpoint, it became obvious that our goal to complete a full pilot of the system was too ambitious. Minor glitches became apparent as the system progressed through its many information gathering stages. Forms had errors, instructions were inaccurate or unclear, and participants were sometimes confused about their roles. A major problem was the user "unfriendliness" of the computer printout which division chairmen needed to compare student with self ratings. Therefore, preparing for interviews became much more labor intensive for division chairmen than anticipated.

In order to salvage the project, it was decided to test the entire system with only a sample of faculty. Each division randomly selected four of its instructors to undergo the complete process. For the majority of faculty, appraisals were abridged, stopping after the student and self forms were scanned.

The pilot test yielded valuable information that the task force was able to use in making revisions

to the overall system. Some of these revisions included changes in wording on forms and instructions, changes in the anchors for the Likert scales and the elimination of redundant statements. The basic procedure and sources for feedback remained unchanged. All efforts at this point focused on streamlining the process, clarifying statements and trying to reduce the frustration level brought on by demanding timelines.

Conclusion

When looking back to the inception of the project, members of the task force sometimes question the lengthy journey they undertook to arrive at where they are today. Purchasing a commercially prepared system would have saved numerous hours of staff time and many of the glitches yet to be resolved could have been avoided. It's relevant, however, to reflect on the importance of the development process. The entire full-time faculty of the college has been engaged in open dialogue on what effective teaching is and how they want to receive feedback on their own teaching performance. Surveys, open forums, division meetings and one-to-one conversations have been focused on the essential mission - teaching and learning. While not always a harmonious venture, it has been a healthy one that has fueled some fires and invigorated the organization as a whole. The college is pleased with the product - a new faculty appraisal system. Beyond this, the dynamic of change and the focus on instructional excellence generated by the faculty in creating its system has been equally valuable to the institution. The process itself has created a powerful momentum that continues to grow and to advance the importance of the teaching role at Arizona Western College.

Authors

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Arizona Western College

SELF FORM C

Instructor's Name _____

Instructor's Number _____

F ○ Sp ○ Su ○ Yr (91) (92) (93) (94) (95)

I. TEACHING 80%

1. I distribute an up-to-date syllabus to each student at the beginning of the semester. Yes ○ No ○

2. I inform students in clearly understandable writing of course goals and objectives, grading and attendance policies, and text and supply requirements. Yes ○ No ○

3. I conduct the course based on a specified set of objectives. Yes ○ No ○

SCALE FOR ITEMS #4 THROUGH #40

NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not Applicable	Hardly Ever		Sometimes		Usually		Always

4. The course materials I distribute to students or require for the course are understandable and applicable. (01)①②③④⑤⑥⑦

5. I keep current and am confident of my mastery of the course content. (02)①②③④⑤⑥⑦

6. I attempt to make my classes interesting. (03)①②③④⑤⑥⑦

7. I am enthusiastic about teaching my classes. (04)①②③④⑤⑥⑦

8. I encourage an open atmosphere where students feel free to ask questions and seek help if needed, both without penalty. (05)①②③④⑤⑥⑦

9. I change my methods and/or approach to accommodate different styles of learning. (06)①②③④⑤⑥⑦

10. I make use of a variety of media and resources in my instruction to clarify content and increase interest. (07)①②③④⑤⑥⑦

11. I adhere to the subject. (08)①②③④⑤⑥⑦

12. I encourage critical thinking and analysis. (09)①②③④⑤⑥⑦

13. The work I assign requires a reasonable amount of time and effort. (10)①②③④⑤⑥⑦

14. I manage my classroom to create a climate conducive to learning. (11)①②③④⑤⑥⑦

15. I change the pace when students seem not to be learning. (12)①②③④⑤⑥⑦

16. I address my students by their names and as well as possible know their abilities and backgrounds. (13)①②③④⑤⑥⑦

17. I recognize and encourage student progress. (14)①②③④⑤⑥⑦

18. I treat all students with fairness and respect. (15)①②③④⑤⑥⑦

19. I have a positive attitude about a student's ability to learn. (16)①②③④⑤⑥⑦

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20. My speech is clear and understandable.

21. I attempt to show the relevance of course content to everyday life.

22. My class presentations are well-planned and organized.

23. I give tests which evaluate how well the course objectives have been reached.

24. I keep accurate and current records for students to review their progress.

25. I return student work promptly with appropriate feedback.

26. My grading system is clear, fair and uses a variety of factors to determine grades.

27. I begin and end classes as scheduled.

28. I inform my students of my office hours and am available during those times.

29. I adhere to the instructional calendar in regard to class meetings, final exams, holidays and other scheduled duty days.

30. I respond in a timely manner to requests for information from appropriate college personnel.

31. I encourage use of outside readings and other resources.

32. I make prior arrangements for audio-visual aids, typing, duplicating, transparencies, supplies, equipment and room set-ups, and I follow up on all such procedures to ensure that the class functions as planned.

After filling out paragraphs on Form C-1, fill out question 33 and 34.

33. My rating of my personal and professional growth is:

①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
below expectations			satisfactory			above expectations

34. My overall rating of my college/community service is:

①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
below expectations			satisfactory			above expectations

ADDITIONAL ITEMS FOR INSTRUCTORS WITH LABORATORY/CLINICAL CLASSES

35. I or an authorized designee am present during the lab/clinic sessions.

36. I or an authorized designee help students during the lab/clinic sessions.

37. I or an authorized designee emphasize the practice of safety procedures during lab/clinic sessions.

38. I or an authorized designee demonstrate skills to the group as well as individual students.

39. I or an authorized designee explain the relationship of lab/clinic exercise to lecture and text materials.

40. I design the lab/clinic work to help students better understand the course material.

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AWC Form C/91

ARIZONA WESTERN COLLEGE
STUDENT APPRAISAL OF INSTRUCTION
LECTURE/RECITATION AND CLINICAL/LABORATORY CLASSES

Instructor's Name: _____ Course Title _____

Instructor is: ○ FULL TIME ○ PART TIME

○ FALL ○ SPRING ○ SUMMER

YEAR: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

SECTION #: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

INSTRUCTIONS: Your thoughtful responses to the following items will provide helpful information to the instructor to assist in the improvement of teaching and will provide one source of data in evaluating the faculty member for continuing employment. The college and faculty appreciate your assistance in improving instruction and your cooperation in completing this evaluation form.

Please read each statement carefully and select the response which in your judgement best describes the instructor. Make only one response for each statement. You must use a number 2 pencil.

1. I was given the course syllabus/outline at the beginning of the semester. ○ Yes ○ No
2. The course syllabus/outline contained information about what I was expected to learn as well as the grading system, assignments, attendance policy, text requirements, and office hours. ○ Yes ○ No
3. My instructor has organized the course well. ○ Yes ○ No

SCALE FOR ITEMS #4 – #34 and #40 – #45

NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not Applicable	Hardly Ever		Sometimes		Usually		Always

4. My instructor follows a course outline that agrees with the objectives of the course. NA 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. My instructor's handouts are helpful and understandable. NA 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. My instructor demonstrates knowledge of the subject. NA 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. My instructor makes learning this subject interesting. NA 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. My instructor shows enthusiasm when teaching the subject. NA 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. My instructor encourages students to express their viewpoints and ask questions without penalty. NA 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. My instructor begins and ends class as scheduled. NA 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
11. My instructor uses interesting and informative teaching aids as appropriate (Examples are: films, tapes, transparencies, chalkboards, computers and others). NA 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
12. My instructor sticks to the subject. NA 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
13. My instructor gives assignments requiring a reasonable amount of time and effort. NA 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
14. My instructor creates and maintains a classroom atmosphere that helps me to learn. NA 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
15. My instructor presents material more slowly when new ideas are introduced. NA 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
16. My instructor knows and calls me by my name. NA 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
17. My instructor recognizes and encourages my progress. NA 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
18. My instructor treats me with fairness and encourages mutual respect. NA 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
19. My instructor has a positive attitude about my ability to learn. NA 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

SCALE FOR ITEMS #4 — #34 and #40 — #45

NA = Not Applicable; 1 = Hardly Ever; 2 3 4 = Sometimes; 5 6 = Usually; 7 = Always

20. My instructor speaks clearly and is easily understood.
21. My instructor relates course content to everyday life.
22. My instructor seems well prepared for each class.
23. My instructor challenges me to think.
24. My instructor's tests cover material presented in class or given as assignments.
25. I am able to find out about my progress in the course.
26. My instructor returns test results and assignments within a reasonable amount of time.
27. The process for determining my grade is clear and fair.
28. My instructor returns assignments and tests with helpful comments.
29. My instructor uses different teaching methods as appropriate (teaching methods include lecture, group activities, demonstrations, discussions and others).
30. My instructor is available to meet with me during posted office hours.
31. My grade is determined by a variety of factors (examples include assignments, tests, attendance, class participation and others).
32. I look forward to the next class session.
33. My instructor encourages me to use outside readings and other resources.
34. I find the textbook(s) and course material useful.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS FOR ALL STUDENTS

35. For me, this course was ○ an elective ○ required ○ job upgrade
36. If you had a choice, would you take another class from this INSTRUCTOR? ○ Yes ○ No
37. Would you recommend this COURSE to other students? ○ Yes ○ No
38. What grade do you expect to receive in this course? ● ● ○ Less than C ○ Other (credit/no credit, audit)
39. Rate the adequacy of this form in allowing you to say the things about the course/instructor that you feel are important. ○ Excellent ○ Satisfactory ○ Unsatisfactory

STOP— THIS COMPLETES THE EVALUATION

ADDITIONAL ITEMS FOR STUDENTS WITH CLINICAL OR LABORATORY CLASSES ONLY

Leave this section blank if there is no laboratory

40. My instructor is present during clinic/lab sessions.
41. My instructor helps me when I have a problem during clinic/lab sessions.
42. My instructor emphasizes the practice of safety procedures during all clinic/lab periods.
43. My instructor effectively demonstrates skills to the group as well as to individual students.
44. My instructor explains the relationship of the clinic/lab exercises to lecture and text materials.
45. The clinic/lab work helps me to better understand the course material.

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